

**SPECIFICATION AMENDMENTS**

On page 1, delete line 1.

On page 1, above line 1, insert--Priority Claim

The present application claims priority on European Patent Application 02080230.2 filed 12 December 2002 and European Patent Application 03075523.5 filed 24 February 2003.--

On page 1, above line 1, but below above, insert--Field of the Invention--

On page 1, above line 15, insert--Background of the Invention--

Paragraph on page 3, line 25 has been amended as follows:

-- The invention is based on the insight that the mandrel and the housing in practice each behave as elastically deformable members having a certain mechanical stiffness. The entity mechanical stiffness is, for the purpose of the present description, defined as the ratio of the force transmitted through a member over a certain length and the amount of increment or decrement of that length. In order to avert an uneven distribution of the load over the bearing stages resulting from the elastic behaviour of the mandrel, the housing and the bearings, the mitigation means serves to distribute the load substantially proportionally over the respective bearing stages. Thereby it is substantially avoided that some of the bearing stages are loaded beyond their maximum allowable load while other bearing stages in the series could still have taken the excess portion of the load.--

On page 7, above line 24, insert--Brief Description of the Drawing--

On page 7, above line 34, insert--Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiment --

On page 19, after line 7, insert the following paragraph:

----While the illustrative embodiments of the invention have been described with particularity, it will be understood that various other modifications will be readily apparent to, and can be easily made by one skilled in the art without departing from the spirit of the invention. Accordingly, it is not intended that the scope of the following claims be limited to the examples and descriptions set forth herein but rather that the claims be construed as encompassing all features which would be treated as equivalents thereof by those skilled in the art to which this invention pertains.--

On page 20, above line 1, insert: We claim: